

March 21, 2008

Allan Brenner
4539 Occidental Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Dear Members of the Guide Dog Board,

My term on the State Board of Guide Dogs has reached its conclusion and I want to thank those with whom I have worked and extend my appreciation for their dedication and great efforts.

My tenure on the Board has been a rewarding and varied experience. Over the last seven years, the Guide Dog Board has gained the respect of many guide dog handlers, licensees, and those who are blind and visually impaired, as well as supporters of the guide dog movement. This has been largely achieved by gaining an unprecedented level credibility through the establishment and maintenance of standards. Having been a part of this hallmark transformation, I am proud of the Board's many accomplishments.

Our many significant achievements include but are not limited to the following:

- Acted on issues presented by the three licensee schools that had been ignored for years bringing them to positive conclusions
- Changed the arbitration process to ensure that the rights of handlers and schools are protected and clearly defined
- Transformed the entire testing process to insure that it will always be appropriate, defensible, consistent and evaluated by subject matter experts rather than non-professional Board Members
- Established an ambitious strategic plan and successfully achieved many, if not most of its objectives

Several months ago during the search for a new executive officer, the State Board of Guide Dogs had a golden opportunity to change history and do something that would send a significant message to all stakeholders: To select a skilled and qualified administrator who is blind or visually impaired as well as a guide dog handler. This was possible due to the number of highly qualified applicants who were also guide dog users. Although a thoroughly professional and qualified applicant was ultimately selected, I feel that the occasion to acquire the advantageous aspects of one directly knowledgeable about blindness, the blind community and guide dogs was lost. In spite of my disappointment, I ask that full support is given to the current executive officer, Antonette Sorrick. Throughout the hiring process, I perceived no evidence of discrimination.

Further, it is my hope that the members of the guide dog handling community work closely with the Board to ensure that the interests of this community are addressed. In partnership, the Board and consumers may continue to improve the quality of services while striving towards equal access for all.

I wish the Board Members and Executive Officer great success in future endeavors.

With warm regards,

Allan Brenner